



Governor Kim Reynolds
Lt. Governor Adam Gregg
San Wong, Director

MEETING MINUTES

COMMISSION OF ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER AFFAIRS (CAPI)

Date: Saturday, May 12, 2018

Time: 9:30 PM – 11:30 PM

Location: West Des Moines Public Library – Meeting Room C
4000 Mills Civic Pkwy, West Des Moines, IA 50265

Conference-call & public access was provided

Commissioners Present:

Ben Jung, Chair – *West Des Moines*
James Suong – *Des Moines*
Karlai Thornburg – *Ames*
Michelle Yoshimura-Smith – *Des Moines*
Peggy La – *Sioux City*
DHR Director San Wong – Ex Officio

Absent:

Ritu Gurung - *Davenport*
Suresh Basnet – *Cedar Rapids*

DHR/CAS/API Staff:

Monica Stone, DHR Deputy Director/Community & Advocacy Services Division Administrator
Tina Shaw, Executive Officer for Office of Asian & Pacific Islander Affairs/CAS

Public Attendance:

None.

I. Call to Order

Chair Jung called the meeting to order at 9:38 AM. Commissioners Jung, Suong, Thornburg, Yoshimura-Smith, La and Wong present. Absent: Gurung, Basnet. Quorum present.

II. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes

Jung motioned, seconded by Thornburg to approve the minutes from the 3/20/18 meeting. Unanimous consent. **Motion carried.** Minutes will be posted to the DHR-CAPI website.

III. CAPI Pre-Election Discussion

A. Commissioner Roles & Responsibilities

Shaw explained the supporting documents that were prepared for new-commissioner orientation by DHR which included governance and guidance materials. A document outlining roles and responsibilities of commissioners, as well as office-holder positions was provided. Jung presented the question of how the Commission would like to move forward with the election process.

B. Election Date & Process

Stone explained that timelines for the Department and all CAS Commissions should align. Under a new process, the following deadlines were mapped out to deliver policy recommendations to key decision-makers: October 1 – data gathering; November 15 – December 1 -- Community & Advocacy Services Division analyzes data to complete a comprehensive report for underserved populations. By mid-December, DHR would schedule a meeting with the Governor's office and present a comprehensive DHR report and how findings connect with the Governor's goals. Following any Governor's briefing, DHR would make the report public and begin coalition building with key stakeholders. Prior to the start of the legislative session in mid-January, DHR leaders would present a robust policy document to legislators.

Based on the new process, Yoshimura-Smith suggested two meetings before the October 1 deadline: one in late-June, another early-July with a vote to follow in September. This timeline should accommodate an election.

Another consideration is onboarding of two new commissioners and their desired areas of involvement and participation levels.

Shaw advised the Commission to consider moving CAPI meetings around the state where API-dense communities are located. Discussion followed. Jung suggested the Commission hold the next CAPI meeting in conjunction with the June 16 Siouxland Asian Festival in Sioux City. Peggy La provided event details. Commissioners unanimously agreed to the concept.

No exact date or process was set for CAPI elections.

IV. EDUCATION – EducAsian – CAPI Initiative in partnership with Des Moines Public Schools Center for New Americans

Shaw recapped how the CAPI arrived at the decision to pursue the EducAsian Initiative as a pilot project -- starting with Des Moines Public School. At a past meeting, Vinh Nguyen with Des Moines Public Schools and the Vietnamese American Community of Iowa presented information on EducAsian, a program once in operation under CAPI that brought API students and parents to a half-day resources fair complemented by workshops and speakers. Drafted jointly with Nguyen using this model, Shaw presented a program narrative with goals, budget and outcomes for the CAPI to consider. Since the draft was completed, new information was presented that more effective techniques are preferred and the pilot should be retooled from a

one-day event to a short series of hands-on site visits for students and parents to visit apprenticeship programs and community colleges, along with a guided tour provided by the college or employer.

Discussion followed. Thornburg commented that the current draft is too generic and should contain specific outcomes such as high-school graduation and identify underlying reasons students do not graduate (i.e., parents' value of high-school attainment). Thornburg suggested inclusion of ninth grade and creation of a mentor program for youth still deciding on career options. Stone noted an outstanding Girl Scouts career mentor program.

Suong added that parents who are new-comers to the US work very long hours and lose track of what their children are doing and their interests. For those focused on a military career track, Suong is hosting a group of students at Camp Dodge for a half-day event tailored around college financial aid made possible via a military career and long-term military career pathways.

Shaw will continue the conversation with Nguyen to provide for a community stakeholder dialog resulting in updated ways to deliver a meaningful program for both the parents and students. Stone noted that some department resources may be available to provide transportation.

Shaw will provide an update at the next CAPI meeting.

V. Announcements & Miscellaneous

A. Commissioner Reports

Earlier in the meeting, La provided information about her role in creating the Siouxland Asian Festival now in its sixth year. Historically, funding for the event came from businesses. While much smaller than other Asian festivals around the state, it is growing - attendance is now upwards of 300+ people. Organizers and volunteers are primarily from Vietnamese churches and temples who partner with city officials, the Sanford Center, Mary Treglia Community House, and the Sioux City Human Rights Office.

La requested any level of event funding from CAPI and made a formal request.

Jung replied that past requests made by former commissioners were denied due to lack of resources. Stone offered two ways to handle such requests in the future: 1) create a 501 (c)(3) "Friends" group; or 2) fundraise and deposit into a donation account that currently exists for each population-specific Commission/Office. Donations are to be used in accordance with commission-related work and initiatives and are in restricted accounts for prescribed purposes.

Wong described the process to establish the Friends of the Commission on the Status of Women and the formal process created to approve project funding. Bylaws were expressly written to fund activities related to the Women's Commission.

Stone added that the Latino Affairs Commission recently established a Friends group, but no bylaws are in place yet. She anticipates they will likely be similar to fund commission-supported events.

B. Office Report

US 2020 Census

Jung talked about the recent visit to Des Moines by Holly Ham from the White House Initiative on Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders (WHIAAPI). During the roundtable at the Greater Des Moines Partnership with those from Iowa's API leadership, the issue of the citizenship question was posed to Ham by CAPI.

Wong stated CAPI was very involved in 2010 Census and made a really big push for survey responses. She recalled it being funded to target many of the populations DHR serves and will look into it further with the accounting arm of DHR.

Wong noted while CAPI was very involved last time around, it now operates as one department versus separate Offices and Commissions. Wong advised that the DHR Board should take action on by early 2019 and work alongside the Governor Office. Jung said the census warrants board-level discussion and action. DHR has two remaining board meetings this year, and Jung plans to "tee up" this cross-cutting issue and ask that it be an official agenda item.

CelebrAsian 2018

Jung is working with the Iowa Asian Alliance - Civic Engagement leaders to organize a "Soap Box" for candidates to speak from in advance of the June 4 Primary Election.

Wong explained the event's "Sweet Sixteen" theme focusing on youth and encouraging them to be more active and aware of their heritage.

Shaw thanked Iowa Asian Alliance for going above and beyond to include the Marshallese community whose challenges have been discussed in past CAPI meetings. Among the facets of their inclusion: 1) tent space as an Emerging Community; 2) brief remarks at the VIP lunch; 3) fashion show slot, and 4) island dancers' performance.

Ottumwa Trip Report

Shaw met with city economic development leaders and was provided a tour of downtown and Main Street enhancements that included street repairs, building restorations and new business start-ups. Larger plans are developing to increase inventory of housing for a high price-point market. Shaw also met with a representative of JBS meat processing who explained human resources outreach initiatives to its plant employees – many of whom are Burmese, Marshallese. Shaw also apprized the Commission of the new DHR Human Rights Youth Chapter to reach out to high-school students in Ottumwa that was established by Sonia Reyes-Snyder and Amanda Lovan.

VI. Public Comment & Community Input

None.

VII. Next CAPI meeting

The next meeting will take place in Sioux City on June 16 in concert with the Siouxland Asian Festival at Riverside Park, 1301 Riverside Boulevard from Noon – 4:00pm. A large part of this meeting will serve as a Community Listening & Engagement Forum to meet with festival-goers.

Mr. George Sayavong, former Sioux City CAPI Commissioner who served DHR for nearly 10 years, will be recognized for his community contributions at the event. Sayavong passed in late 2017. His widow, Toni, and family will be present.

VIII. Adjournment

Yoshimura-Smith motioned, seconded by Jung to adjourn the meeting at 11:55 AM. Unanimous consent. ***Motion carried.***